

West Valley SPARK SUMMIT AGENDA

January 15, 2026

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.:
Check-in & Networking

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.: Welcome & Opening General Session

Student Panel: Career Exploration & Student Success

Moderator: Rahsaan Bartet, Career Literacy Specialist, West-MEC

West Valley Economic Forecast

Speaker: Kevin Dumcum, Director of Regional Workforce Development, WestMARC

On the Horizon: Arizona's State Plan for Middle School Career Exploration

Presenters & Facilitators: Cindy Erwin, Director of College and Career Pathways, Center for the Future of Arizona, and Debra Raeder, Lead Consultant, Arizona Business & Education Coalition

Educator Panel: Snapshots of What's Working

Moderator: Erin McGehean, Project Manager, College & Career Pathways, Western Maricopa County, Center for the Future of Arizona

Panelists: Amy Rendon, Principal, Tres Rios Service Academy (Littleton ESD); Nicole Goodwin, Principal, MC Cash Elementary (Laveen ESD), and Laura Combs, Director of Educational Technology, Litchfield ESD

10:40 a.m. – 11:50 a.m. Breakout Session Rotation (guests will attend all three)

Round 1: 10:40-11 a.m. | Round 2: 11:05-11:25 a.m. | Round 3: 11:30-11:50 a.m.

Measuring Success: Career Exploration as a Strategy for Impacting Outcomes

Presenters: Tracey Benson, President & CEO, Arizona Business & Education Coalition, and Matthew Gilbert, Assistant Principal, Verrado High School

Bringing K-8 Career Literacy Standards to Life

Presenters: Rahsaan Bartet, Career Literacy Specialist, West-MEC, and Susan Farretta, Career Development Program Specialist, Arizona Department of Education

Pathway Planning & the eCAP (Because a Goal without a Plan is Just a Wish)

Presenters: Debra Raeder, Lead Consultant, Arizona Business & Education Coalition, and Cindy Erwin, Director of College and Career Pathways, Center for the Future of Arizona

11:50 – 12:45 p.m. Lunch & Closing Keynote

Featured Speaker: Dr. Jennifer Cruz, Superintendent, Pendergast ESD

12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.: Team Time or West-MEC Southwest Valley Campus Tour

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